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Special Supplement M2 Publishing Standards for Meshan CT Project

Aiming For Approved For Use With

TRAVELLER®

for contributing authors

FSpace Publications

Credits

Concept & Development	Martin Rait
Contract excerpt	Marc Miller
Production	Martin Rait
Publisher	FSpace Publications
Edition	v2, April 2002 (republished as v2.0.1, Sept 2022)

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Originally published as an internal document (v1) on 12/03/2002 titled *Publishing Standards: Traveller at FSpace Publications* and was confidential to employees and subcontractors.

The v2 edition contains additional information, editorial fixes and layout compliance with project booklets.

v2.0.1 updates the online topic URLs, adds QR codes and adds some additional comments..

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ISBN (v2.0.1 PDF) 978-1-877573-57-6
SKU FSPEB263
URL https://www.fspacerpg.com/proddetail.php?ID=FSPEB263

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This publication is published by

FSpace Publications, 30 Gardiner Grove, Wainuiomata, Lower Hutt 5014, New Zealand

www.fspacerpg.com

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Contents

Topic	Page
Credits	2
Contents	3
Publisher's Directive from Far Future Enterprises	4
Target Audience	5
Plagiarism	6
Libel	7
Obscenity & Graphic Descriptions	8
Subjects Prohibited	9
Use of Other Materials	10
Identifying Use	11
Disagreements & Discussion	12
Online topics	13

Publisher's Directive from Far Future Enterprises

The contract between Far Future Enterprises (FFE) and FSpace Publications states:

11. QUALITY STANDARD FOR MATERIAL

Licensee agrees that it will exert its best efforts to achieve a high standard of quality in its product based on Licensor's Game.

A. Material or depictions (artwork, graphics, text, game concepts) will not portray sexually flavored art or content, nor will it portray unacceptable or vulgar language. All material will be suitable for young adults. All material will be created or produced in such a way that the typical American parent will approve.

B. Notification. This standard must be made clear to outside writers, editors, and artists preparing material for publication as part of the specification for the material. This standard must be made clear to staff preparing, editing, or producing product; all staff must be made aware that material which does not meet this standard will not be published.

C. Consequences. Submitted material which fails to meet this standard will not be accepted or paid for. In-house material which does not meet this standard will be rejected or re-done. Material ready for processing or printing must meet this standard.

What does this mean?

This guide is the evolving standards that communicate the required standards and quality to achieve this objective. All project participants must be familiar with this guide, and all subsequent updates to it.

It also charges FSpace Publications with the responsibility and discretion to anticipate and define the appropriate standards in line with standard RPG publishing industry practices, and within the constraints of the laws operating in the various target markets.

Note that the agreement means that Marc Miller of Far Future Enterprises will undertake reviews of the publications before publication and has editorial veto and may mandate changes. This is not a free for all to do what you want. Just because certain kinds of materials may have once been published for Traveller, doesn't mean Marc wants that style of material again. FSpace Publications will undertake best efforts to guide contributors and authors to deliver materials that it expects to meet these standards.

We need to make it clear this is not a project controlled by any one particular author.

Aspects of this guide are not open to debate with contributors where it pertain specifically to upholding the contractual quality standards, and all work that doesn't meet this criteria will be rejected. Plain and simple.

Keep in mind that Marc Miller has an element of veto and editorial power over this project.

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Target Audience

The Traveller game system is presently designed for a broad general audience which ranges from pre-teens to middle aged people (and older as the community ages).

Given this general audience, the publications must not fall within any censorship category.

The license FSpace Publications has restricts publications to be released only in English format.

This entails that the primary market for the products will be Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

Game Experience

To best capture the market and possibly rejuvenate the 'Classic Traveller' part of the game system, all publications should be written as relatively self contained, and should not rely on moderate to advanced knowledge of the diversity of material already in existing publications.

This means it should be easy to use for beginners to the system, and best fit a working knowledge of the base rulebooks and supplements applicable to the publication in question.

Plagiarism

Using material derived from other sources is stepping on dangerous ground because of the issues surrounding copyright, licenses and trademarks.

FSpace Publications basically doesn't accept any work derived from material of any other publisher. In any agreements you sign with us, you as a writer have to make a declaration to this effect.

Even though quoting, commentary and fair use do apply in various copyright provisions these vary from country to country. Because of these regional differences we take a hard line approach with regards to it, and you as the writer must accept all liability, and indemnify us against all damages and losses that arise as a result of the publication of a work that contains any material you have not declared correctly to us.

We do accept works which contain material already published by us (for Traveller). However you should inform your Product Line Manager that you're doing it. We have to ensure we give credit to everyone whose material is included. As the writer it's your responsibility to declare and clearly mark all sections. If you fail to do so, we are likely to terminate all relationships with you, forever. Be warned! We talk about this more later.

In most cases we will not allow you to reproduce material from our other publications. This is at our sole discretion.

If you work needs a map produced, which is based on an existing map, we cannot simply duplicate or trace over an existing map to make maps for your book. If you give us photocopies of published maps as source material, we must redraw it (so don't send them in at the last moment). And we must have the ISBN (or ISSN), title, author, and publisher of the original map, to give proper credit to the source material.

The same applies with artwork, diagrams or photographs of some hypothetical, real or historical place, person, device etc.

In all cases you must supply a copy of the original from which it is was taken. If it appears in colour, you must supply a suitable colour copy.

See the later sections on the use of other materials for more details.

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Libel

Any contributor must not make reference to any real world organisation or individual. Period!

Traveller is set thousands of years in the future, and our institutions play little part in the Traveller universe.

Why?

We don't want any contributor to write anything in the way of slander, satire or anything that can frankly be taken as offensive by any existing individual or organisation that could sue us.

In taking on a contract from Far Future Enterprises, FSpace Publications must ensure it does not bring the Traveller game system into any disrepute.

Furthermore severe limits exist on our business regarding the level of cover for liability, indemnity and other insurances. Although they are suitable for New Zealand, they are not sufficient to cover damages in foreign markets, such as the United States, where FSpace Publications is bound by it's license to be governed in any legal dispute regarding the contract with Far Future Enterprises.

Rejection is based on a case by case basis, and is totally at the discretion of the Director of FSpace Publications. No discussion on this will be entered into, except where a solution exists to alter libel material to something that is not offensive.

We already have had a case with this project, and we wish to avoid wasting further time, including that of the contributors of ours.

Please do not try and craft hidden libel statements. We know some people like taking subtle satirical digs at some people and institutions. Don't! Our Traveller work is not the place for that. Marc Miller may have a different view on things, but I encourage you to take such things up with him directly. We might be allowed, but most likely not. I don't expect his views to align with all potential contributors.

Your contract holds you liable for such issues. In some cases you may not have such a contract, and the Product Manager for the book is held liable (one of the reasons we need to make sure every contributor holds a contract with FSpace Publications). So for legal protection, please avoid this at all costs.

I hope people understand.

Obscenity & Graphic Descriptions

No sex, pornography, foul or obscene language, or graphic descriptions or depictions of violence should be included in any works for publication.

Given our target audience this is inappropriate, and in many cases some parents of potential games users may take strong action in reaction to such material.

Creative story writing may need to cover some of these topics, but use neutral, non-descriptive language to describe such things. Allow the gamers in question to decide any flourishes they wish to add, but leave graphic descriptions out of the publication text.

We realise there are situations where scenarios involving investigating crime and similar matters where some description is required.

Don't use foul language in your manuscript either.

FSpace Publications will reject all such works containing any obscene or overly graphic material.

Expect firm editorial control of content in this area.

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Subjects Prohibited

For various reasons there are topics that are off limits.

Proposals regarding the topics below are subject to automatic rejection at this time, unless they meet any exception mentioned. If you decide to send us a query anyway, don't expect a response any different to this.

Fantasy/Magic

Traveller is a hard core science fiction role playing game. It does not include the use of magic or fantasy elements. High technology will be perceived as magic to low tech primitives. The existence of psionics is the only other sanctioned mechanism that may be called 'magic'.

Hell

Traveller is a hard core science fiction role playing game. It does not step into realms of the supernatural, except the psionic powers described. For general content purposes discussions on local religions and concepts of hell should be kept very brief and kept in the realm of theological/philosophical description that is suitable for young adults, so they should be the equivalent to a G or PG movie.

Having demons and other religious beings wandering around is not considered part of the universe. However local lower tech planets may have equivalent entities with very normal biological basis for the mythology in question.

Use caution, and expect us to cull or heavily edit things to fit.

Babylon 5, Star Trek, Star Wars, or any other licensed media property.

We are not in possession of any license to publish for other existing science fiction franchises, nor to conduct cross overs. Please avoid any direct or partial rip-offs from such material. It is plagiarism and will be rejected immediately.

FSpaceRPG™

Although FSpace Publications has full rights to use FSpaceRPG™ as it sees fit, the current decision of the Director precludes the commercial merging of FSpaceRPG™ into commercial Traveller products. Current FSpaceRPG™ material is not to be merged into Traveller products.

Complete manuscripts written for another company/game, etc.

Because Traveller is managed under a strict license we like to have creative input early on in the process to ensure the work being developed fits our criteria. We would like to avoid using material previously submitted to other firms for consideration for legal reasons. The resources required to evaluate a fully developed manuscript is expensive, and can result in the waste of valuable resources when one can't be accepted after review.

This doesn't rule out the possibility of a new game product being presented to us. This guide is for Traveller products only and our standards and guidelines for other games will differ.

Use of Other Materials

Using Published Third Party Material

We generally insist that material from published works not be used because of issues relating to the copyright ownership of these works. Both our own Copyright Act in New Zealand and other international laws must be taken into account. If a publication is going to be shipped internationally it must adhere to the most strictest of these conventions.

Because many small publishers do not have the resources to research all these copyright issues, and because the USA has registered copyright processes, it is basically best for a small publisher to exclude the use of all third party published material.

Quoting as an Acceptable Method

Most copyright provisions allow the use of directly quoted material with proper referencing of the source material. In some cases this is okay, such as with academic works and the like. However the RPG industry has a history of legal wrangles regarding ownership, and it is best to avoid it.

Use of Existing Traveller Material

The license we have does allow us to incorporate material that is part of the Traveller game system. The degree to which we use it has not been defined. For practical reasons it is best to not use it wholesale. See the Fair Use comment on the following page.

Also the issue of GURPS Traveller material arises. This material is owned by Steve Jackson Games, and may be owned by Marc Miller. But I am not privy to that contract. Given this material is actively published, Steve Jackson Games will not like the use of this material by a competing publisher. Consider all material by Steve Jackson Games out of bounds. And I mean all of it.

Only material previously published by GDW and IG is acceptable.

Any material published non-commercially by HIWG or individuals is also generally out of bounds. This material is copyright by those individuals and is not included under Marc's ownership, except where private agreement has been reached for some purpose or another.

If you want to include it, seek permission, let me know, and I'll discuss terms with the party concerned.

Note that we consider material by Digest Group Publications also out of scope for use.

Materials from other publishers

Since this publication was originally issued, a lot has changed in the Traveller space with many more publishers entering the market, and even community commercial author publishing allowed with certain limits. Treat these the same as GURPS Traveller mentioned earlier.

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Identifying Use

You must clearly mark all material derived from other sources, even if you reword them. We have to ensure we know where the material comes from.

With a commercial contract we have some leeway, but the intent is to use as much original material as possible. Where you do intend to use existing material, try and stick to Traveller's Fair Use policy for scope of reuse of commercial material owned by Far Future Enterprises.

Where material is used from other publishers, identify it but keep in mind we likely can't use it. Expect culls in the editorial process.

Where you have gathered materials from other sources and contributors with rights to use that material, that must be documented, and those sources need to enter into contracts directly with FSpace Publications to ensure we have a clear path to use intellectual property and that it is governed under the contract we hold.

Disagreements & Discussion

FSpace Publications will publish it's standards in revisions of this supplement and enforce those insisted by Far Future Enteprises, along with it's understanding of copyright and trademark law, along with any other actions it feels it needs to seek maximum legal protections from harm and damages that could be brought about by the material created by an author, or their actions where they misrepresent the publisher.

FSpace Publications will not enter into any negotiation discussions or debate regarding disagreements over our terms or interpretation of our own contracts. But we will listen to any concerns.

The license agreement we have for Traveller exists between FSpace Publications and Far Future Enterprises. As the sole proprietor of FSpace Publications, I (Martin Rait) reserve the complete right to undertake this contract as I see fit to meet my obligations to Far Future Enterprises.

The wrangles and debates in the FSpaceRPG™ project proved that it was counter productive, fragments delivery and impacts quality and time-frames. FSpace Publications has decided that it will handle things in a professional manner, and invite dialogue when it sees fit. Only when discussion and debate is invited on a topic not covered by the printed standards will contributors have a chance to potentially shape further guidelines.

Once standards are in place, these must be adhered to or else the company will simply not do business with the party that disagrees.

In this situation we do encourage any serious author to approach Far Future Enterprises for their own licence, or to approach another Traveller publisher about your idea. You may be able to self publish your material for non commercial purposes on the internet under the Fair Use provisions. This publications is effectively published under those Fair Use provisions.

As an alternative, FSpace Publications may be able to accept and adapt the work for its own in-house game systems of FED RPG™, FSpaceRPG™, TayanaRPG™ or our generic science fiction product brands. Beyond that system agnostic materials can be published under the Open Gaming Licence (OGL), or may be suitable for another publisher with a science fiction game similar to Traveller.

Don't give up hope, there are lots of avenues to get your idea to your audience.

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Online topics

The website of FSpace Publications still contains articles useful for those interested in Traveller, Meshan Sector, our Traveller related publications, and how to use the generic (Far Encounters, Far Frontiers, Just The Plans) & FSpaceRPG™ publications with Traveller. Check out the following links or use the QR codes.

https://www.fspacerpg.com/results.php?meta=traveller

https://www.fspacerpg.com/results.php?meta=meshan

The Meshan Sector is a diverse sector of human and Vargr worlds on the Imperial border. HIWG NZ developed aspects of this sector for TNE and have obtained a short duration commercial licence in 2001 to publish a small series of little black book supplements to detail the sector for the classic era (post Fifth Frontier War and prior to the Rebellion).

This booklet is a set of initial publishing guidelines for prospective authors.